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American Is Home After Being Jailed In Cuba as a Spy

A freelance journalist who went to Cuba last year under the auspices of the Institute of Current World Affairs has returned to New York after being held in solitary confinement for 92 days as a suspected spy.

On Christmas Day, after having spent seven months in Cuba lecturing at the University of Havana and gathering notes for a book, the journalist, Frank McDonald, was arrested and charged with being an agent for the Central Intelligence Agency.

He spent the next three months in solitary confinement, broken up only by what he called several sessions of "close questioning." He was not mistreated, he says, although he lost about 30 pounds.

"I was put through a pretty intensive investigation, and when it was finished they knew pretty much all about me," he said.

Still, the guards and authorities "were not antagonistic toward me and it was probably better than some of the prisons we have here," he said.

Mr. McDonald, 30 years old, has been a fellow of the institute, at 535 Fifth Avenue, for four years specializing in the Caribbean. During that time he has written a number of articles on the Caribbean, has contributed to the institute a newsletter on the area, and has co-author of a book.

In 1970, at the invitation of the University of Havana, he spent two months in Cuba, and had no trouble with the authorities.

"This time, I guess they were worried about the notes I was taking," he said. "I interviewed some officials and a lot of people I met."

After he was released from jail he was flown to Spain. He then went to London for a week before returning here on April 7.